

Candace Owens: The Hijacking of 'Christ Is King'

What did Candace Owens mean when she posted that “Christ is King” in the midst of a very public dispute with her Daily Wire employer Ben Shapiro? I’m not going to enter into the details of that dispute, other than to say I agree with Shapiro’s concerns.

Here, I want to focus on Owens posting the words “Christ is King” on X (formerly Twitter).

In a previous post, she quoted the words of Jesus that “you cannot serve both God and money,” causing many to wonder if this was a dig on Jewish people, who are allegedly money hungry.

But why, specifically, did she add, “Christ is King”? Others are wondering as well.

As reported in the Jerusalem Post, “The posts on the social media platform X appeared to some as an anti-Semitic dog-whistle, alluding to Shapiro’s comments and invoking ancient anti-Jewish tropes through its use of biblical language and its appeal to the Christian faith. Yashar Ali, the prominent journalist with more than 700,000 followers on the site, shared a screenshot and said, ‘I know what Candace’s tweets mean.’”

Perhaps Candace Owens can clarify the issues herself?

For those wondering what could be wrong with proclaiming “Christ is King,” the unfortunate reality is that this beautiful, biblically based truth has been hijacked by elements of the extreme religious right, often with anti-Semitic implications.

I pointed this out in my Aug. 8 article denouncing an anti-Semitic rant by Nick Fuentes, where he said (to rousing applause and shouts of affirmation), "'Word is getting out that we got to rid of Jewish power in America,' and despite 'them' doing everything in their power to stop it—censoring and canceling and killing—we are here to say that America is not a Jewish nation. America is a Christian nation.'"

I noted that, "You've got to see the video for yourself, but, to paint the picture here in words, at this point in the speech, on the screen behind him, giant angel wings flap on his right and left, as if he was some kind of angelic messenger. It really does seem like a sick attempt at satire. But I repeat, it is not.

"In fact, in response to his proclamation that America is a Christian nation not a Jewish nation, the crowd begins to chant, 'Christ is King! Christ is King!'"

In his view (and the view of his followers) Christ is King over the world and therefore King over America, not just in a spiritual sense but in the sense of "let's take this country back from the Jews." The chant was hardly biblical at all.

A Dec. 1, 2022 article on the Religion News site stated that, "During a livestream in June, Fuentes advocated for 'Catholic Taliban rule in America,' explaining that such a regime would ban same-sex marriage and contraception. His followers, known as Groypers, were a consistent presence at anti-vaccine and anti-abortion rallies in 2021, often holding aloft crucifixes and chanting 'Christ is king!'"

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More than 10 months earlier, on Jan. 26, 2022, an article posted on the Pulitzer Center website noted that, "When supporters of former President Donald Trump rallied near the

White House on Jan. 6 of last year, a boisterous pocket of young men waving 'America First' flags broke into a chant: 'Christ is King!' It was one of the first indications that Christian nationalism would be a theme of the Capitol attack later that day, where insurrectionists prayed and waved banners that read 'Proud American Christian.'"

Writing on Feb. 6, 2022, Greg Williams explained that,

"The crowd chanted 'Christ is King!' at the March for Life in Washington, DC this January. They chanted it last January too, when an insurrection broke into the US Capitol and attempted to overthrow the government."

That chant is now a calling card of Nick Fuentes and America First—a podcast, conference and community within the broader white Christian nationalist movement. It also happens to be a core proclamation of Christians through the centuries.

When I say 'Christ is King,' I mean something very different from what Fuentes means. While there is a long history of Christian support for violent racism—even using that very same language—a proper theological understanding of 'Christ is King' ought to compel us to live at peace with our neighbors."

To be sure, the vast majority of Christians who participated in the March for Life would absolutely and unequivocally denounce the idea of a Catholic (or, Christian) Taliban. It is likely the same can be said of the great majority of Christians who gathered in DC on that fateful Jan. 6, 2021.

But without a doubt, there is a growing minority that connects "America first" with the proclamation of "Christ is King" in a way that perverts the very meaning of those Jesus-exalting words.

Yes, Jesus *is* King and will always be King. He was born a King, died a King, reigns in heaven as King and will return as King—in fact, as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16).

For myself, as Jewish follower of Jesus, I unashamedly proclaim Him as the Messianic King and the Savior and Lord of all. And yes, in His name and authority we are called to go and make disciples of the nations (Matt. 28:18-20)

But to use "Christ is King" as a political slogan, especially one with racist and anti-Semitic overtones, is to bring disgrace on that holy and beautiful name.

I certainly hope this is not what Candace Owens meant. A clarification is certainly called for.

We dare not mess with such sacred words. {eoa}

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